

Operational Letter for the Purpose of Development on the Subject Property

(PID: 029-237-424)

To: The District of North Cowichan

Attn: Planning Department

Re: 2431 Beverly Street, Duncan, BC V9L 3A1

1. Name of Operator:

Cowichan Green Community

Head Office: 360 Duncan Street, Duncan, BC V9L 3W4
250-748-8506

Farm Operation: 2431 Beverly Street, Duncan, BC V9L 3A1

Contact: Executive Director -**Judy Stafford** judy@cowichangreencommunity.org

2. Preamble:

This letter outlines the commercial operations planned for the proposed building (hereby known as the 'Food Processing and Innovation Hub' or 'Food Hub') to be situated on the parcel of land at 2431 Beverly Street, in Duncan. The property has been leased by Cowichan Green Community from the District of North Cowichan since 2015 for the purpose of an Urban Farm Incubation Program and related activities, and to develop a new Food Processing and Innovation Hub. This Food Hub will facilitate production, processing and storage of agricultural products grown on the Lands and within the region. It is included within the lease entered into with the Municipality that the Cowichan Green Community that the Lessee will build this building in accordance with municipal permits, bylaws, and regulations. It is in the provisions of the lease to Lessor grants permission for the Lessee to licence the cold storage warehouse building on the Lands to the Cowichan Valley Co-operative Marketplace.

In 2021 (Sept 21st meeting) Council approved rezoning of the subject property to allow the project, the Municipality renewed the lease. Zoning on this parcel is A6 -Rural Market Zone. The permitted uses for the A6 zone are as follows: Agriculture, Agricultural Storage, Food and beverage processing, Food truck, Greenhouse, Market Community Space.

3. Description of Operation:

The 'Food Processing and Innovation Hub' will facilitate production, processing, packaging, storage, and ancillary retail of agricultural products grown on The Lands and within the Cowichan region. The intention is a shared-use food and beverage processing

facility that offers food and agriculture businesses access to commercial processing space, equipment, expertise and resources to support business development and growth. The Lessee will be constructing and operating the food processing and innovation hub in partnership with the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries' and the Cowichan Valley Regional District, and it will form part of the BC Food Hub Network with the purpose to serve local food processors and distributors and build a community with increased food security.

The Cowichan Valley Co-operative Marketplace (Cow-Op) intends to lease a portion of the building and equipment for its operation (cold storage, dry storage and loading docks). They will provide home delivery of local food products to the residents of the Cowichan Valley.

The Building proposed will have the following amenities and services:

A commercial kitchen space for local food processing and proper storage, an office, board room and training area will be included to help support the education and growth of strong local businesses. The facility will be constructed to be accessible to Persons with Disabilities, with plans to encourage programming to support this group -as well as other diverse groups.

4. Hours of Operation:

The Processing and Innovation Hub will be accessible to its users 24/7 with an automated entry and security system. Because of the nature of the use of the property, despite the hours being through the night, it is not expected that there will be large numbers of people or cars accessing the facility after business hours. There may be occasional larger group gatherings for the purpose of evening education, fundraising events, or similar.

5. Parking and Loading Strategy:

The 'Food Processing and Innovation Hub' will provide 4 staff parking spots, plus additional parking for passenger vehicles using the facility, as well as 3 loading bays (2 for the Cowichan Valley Co-operative Marketplace) to be used for small to medium transport vehicles. These loading bays are at ground level and not designed for tractor trailer units, but designed for up to 5-tonne delivery vehicles with power lift tailgates. It is anticipated that most vehicles will be delivery vans and smaller.

6. Environmental Consideration:

The location has been chosen based on the relative proximity to wetlands and protected areas as per the Water Sustainability Act. As a green organization, care will be taken to

mitigate any negative influence on the surrounding environment through the entire process of building and running the facility. The build location was greatly limited on this parcel of land due to the nature of being on a floodplain with the soil being made up greatly of silt and sediment from previous historical flooding prior to the construction of the Dike.

With careful consideration and consultation with qualified professionals, the design of the project has been altered to be *one building* housing the entire project. This will have less impact on the site, allow us to follow the recommendations of the geotechnical report in terms of a suitable location, and be more cost effective.